The Archives Movement and Nepal

By
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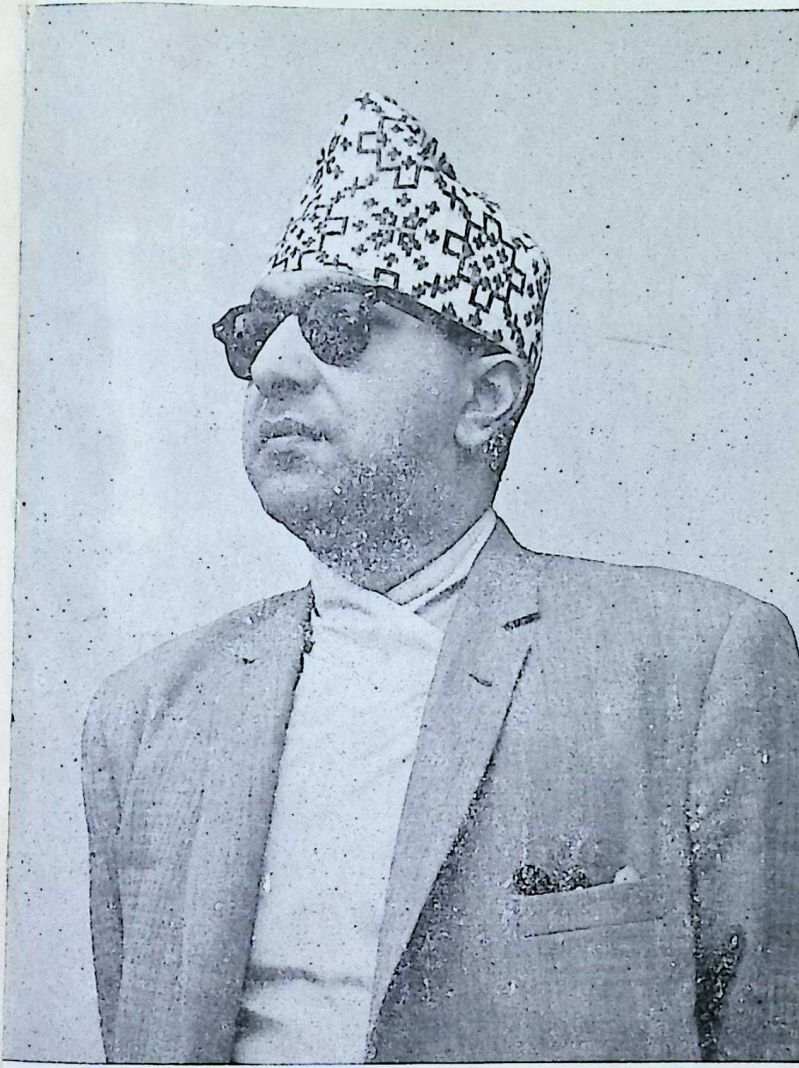
Kathmandu
1967

A brief account of the archival and connected works of the Department of Archaeology presented on the occasion of the inauguration of the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya at Kathmandu, on the 3rd October 1967, by His Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva.



His Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva

Dedicated

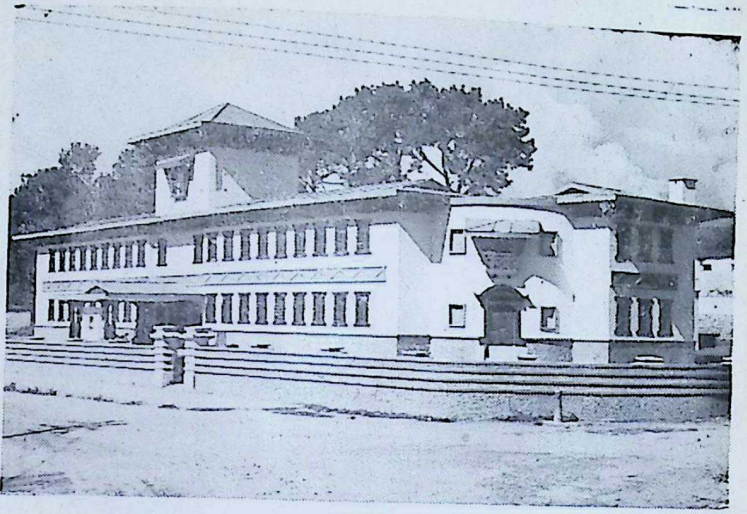
to

His Majesty the King

Mahendra Bir Bikram

Shah Deva

Whose inspiration and deep interest in works of research to assess the glories of the past have ushered in a meaningful present and have paved the way for a brilliant future.



The Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya, Nepal

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by
RAMESH JUNG THAPA

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His Majesty's Government, Nepal

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PREFACE

We are on the threshold of a historic moment. The occasion is provided by the inauguration of the National Archives of Nepal, called, in our words, the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya. The building, as all would agree, is eminently suited to the genius of the people whom it is to serve. It blooms like a piece of architecture shooting up from the pages of the past, in the midst of which it is to live, and it is indeed a lasting tribute to the Indian Cooperation Mission, which has given into it a visible form of its appreciation of the Nepalese spirit.

The occasion would perhaps justify a brief presentation, in the following pages, of what the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya would seek to achieve, and how it shall function. It is a matter for pride to record that Nepal has, in her humble way, sought to harness all resources to unfold her past glories under a unified control and discipline. These constitute archaeology, historical documents, manuscripts and epigraphy, all devoted to a common desideratum.

The Department of Archaeology which co-ordinates these activities seeks the co-operation of one and all, laymen and scholars alike in the furtherance of its mighty task of the rediscovery, preservation and exposition of the diverse heritage of the country. In return it offers its own co-operation in full measure to all who would wish to share in any one or other aspect of this enormously sacred and national trust.

R. J. Thapa

A. Introductory

The word archive, now used generally in the plural, is derived from the Latin word Archivium or Archium and has come to connote at once public or government documents as well as the place where such records are kept. These records or their preservation are not an end in themselves, but they constitute the most informative and reliable source of information on all events of importance or significance in the life of a nation leading to the unfolding and proper assessment of its history, in all its myriad facets.

B. History of the Archives Movement

Though the pratice of maintaining one's records is as old as the art of writing itself, the archives movement is comparatively of recent origin. Among the oldest records must be the writings of the ancient Egyptians, first on clay, and later on papyrus, the ancient Sumerians of what is today called Iraq, the

Hittites and Mitannis, and even the Chinese. These records were no doubt inspired by a desire for self-preservation and propagation, but no systematic attempt at preserving them against damage or decay and for their proper use by scholars, can be said to have been undertaken until the setting up of the library at Nineveh by Assurbanipal (668--626 B.C.). This library, the earliest archives of the world, contained 220,000 clay tablets dealing with a variety of subjects, such as, history, religion, literature, science and medicine. The entire collection is now in the British Museum.

Several centuries later, when the Egyptian lands conquered by Alexander the Great came under the Ptolemies, a great library or storehouse of archives came into existence at Alexandria as an adjunct of its Museum, the oldest university of the world. This Greek legacy was maintained and enlarged by the Romans, but with the fall of the Roman power in A.D. 272, the library, containing over 5,00,000 rolls of papyrus sheets, was completely destroyed.

In retrospect it may be recalled that one of the most interesting historical documents of far-reaching consequence to us of the Orient is a cuneiform record on a clay tablet of a treaty between the Hittites and the Mittanis dating back to *circa*, 1365 B.C. found at Boghaz Keui, the capital of the Hittites, in Turkey. The treaty records the defeat of the Mitanni king, Matiwaza, at the hands of the Hittite king, Suppiluliuma,

the former's marriage to the latter's daughter, Taduhepa, the ensuring of succession to the throne of the Mitannis for the offspring of the marriage and an assurance to maintain peace between the two countries. It was calculated to secure the fruits of victory on the battlefield by diplomacy. As if to seal it finally, the gods and goddesses of the two countries, numbering about a hundred, were invoked to witness, and among them occur the name of Indra, Varuna and the Nasatyas in the same sequence as they occur in the Rigveda. This is the earliest datable record of the Aryan speaking people and it has been accepted by the scholars that both Hittites and Mitannis limitedly spoke or used the Aryan language. The treaty itself was drawn up in two separate versions of the Mitannis and Hittites respectively, but the Mitanni copy has not yet been found. This would not have happened if the State had risen to the occasion and set up an archive of its own.

Though the importance of keeping archives was recognized quite early in human history, the archives movement as such began only after the French Revolution (1789--1793) with the founding of Archives Departmentales in 1796. Other countries took up the cue one after another, and gradually built up their respective archives. It was but natural that the task, being of vital importance to a nation's history, could not be entrusted to any private institution or organization, and the state's responsibility in the matter

of collection and preservation of diverse documents of importance came to be properly and fully recognized. This happened at a time when the State as a concept and entity had weaned itself from the tutelage of the church or priestcraft. In the fitness of things, the state as the largest organized body, could with propriety and facility preserve the records for all posterity.

Meanwhile, the first university in the world which became alive to the importance of archival studies, viz., the University of Mainz in Germany, included Archival Science in its curriculum as far back as A. D. 1790.

C. The Archives Movement and the UNESCO

The relationship between state and state today is becoming closer and thicker every day, and at the same time, in spite of the United Nations, the countries are not secure from war or threats of unforeseen man-made calamities. The slumbering volcanoes of discord among nations keep on rumbling from time to time and often explode in fury, portending the gravest threat to civilization itself, not to speak of the records of the component countries of the world. Nevertheless, the United Nations Organization is alive to the importance of concerted action in regard to the diversely vast records of humanity. It has, therefore, worked out the basic principles of the obligation of belligerent nations to protect the cultural and

documentary heritage of mankind through some self-imposed restrictions.

The Unesco has also brought into being an Internatoinal Council of Archives in 1948, with the set purpose of strengthening the relations among the archivists of the world and devising ways and means of improving and standardizing the methods of preservation, for their use by scholars all over the world, and generally to co-ordinate archival activities among different nations.

Towards archieving an international outlook in archival research, preservation, adminstration and dissemination of archival information, a beginning was made as early as 1950 by organizing the first international conference or congress of Archivists at Paris. It was followed by another held at the Hague three years later, and many more are yet to come.

While the international contacts would help a great deal in the field of methodology, each country will have to face and solve its own problems. One of the primary problems relates to the selection of the documents themselves for preservation. It enjoins upon the archivist a heavy responsibility as he must decide, once for all, what documents shall be kept, and what shall be eliminated and destroyed. This task is sometimes rendered difficult and complicated by the inescapable fact that many of the documents are

confidential in import, and yet extremely important for a proper assessment of the processes of history. It calls upon the archivist to be an officer of circumspection and unquestionable integrity and loyalty to the national interest to ensure at once the secrecy of the documents consigned to his care, as well as discreet and judicious use of the historical information contained in them. No common principle in regard to the selection and weeding out of documents may perhaps be laid down.

The other problems relate to when they should be collected and how they shall be preserved, and what staff shall be employed for their collection, sifting, cataloguing, and research, besides of course the tasks of preserving them against decay, recording them through photographs or microfilms, and, of course, storing and stacking them for use and even making suitable arrangements for their safety in handling.

Though primarily called historical documents, as they are mainly calculated to elucidate the pages of history, their scope today is much more comprehensive than ever before. The reasons are: history itself is no longer looked upon as the record of political events, but it encompasses all aspects of human activity, including religion, industries, education, social condition, literature, arts and culture and of course foreign relations. The claims, therefore, upon the archivist of today are much more exacting than hitherto.

D. The Archives Movement in Nepal

(*i*) *Historical*

Notwithstanding the fitful beginnigs in the dim past of history, which had left no permanent results, the archives movement, making a late beginning in human endeavour, towards the end of the 18th century, has not, however, been very slow in spreading its ripples far and wide. Though not formally named as the archives, the state activity that recognized and fulfilled the Government's responsibility in the line in Nepal can easily be traced to the days of king Prithvi Narayan Shah the Great, if not still earlier. In India, our nearest neighbour, the movement gained a concrete shape when the Imperial Archives of India were founded in 1834, much after king Prithvi Narayan Shah may have devoted any thought to the subject. With the atainment of Independece in 1947, India changed its name to the National Archives of India and at the same time the National Archives of Pakistan as a natural corollary also saw the light of the day. Nepal could not for long remain isolated from the call of the movement, which had made a fair advance under British inspiration in the neighbouring lands.

The formal announcement of the opening of the Archives of Nepal was made under the glorious leadership of our illustrious and beloved king Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva, in the year 1959, on India's assurance to provide funds for the construction of a

National Archives Building and some technical assistance in the initial stages. But documents of importance, especially those dealing with the foreign relations of Nepal, have been maintained carefully since A. D. 1909, in what is known as that Jaisi Kotha. These records were earlier kept in Gaddi-Baithak within Hanuman Dhoka. During the time of Jung Bahadur, they were shifted to Thapathali. They changed their ground again to Tangal Durbar during the Muktearship of Bhima Samsher. Once again they were removed to Mohan Chowk in Hanuman Dhoka. From here the manuscripts moved first to the Army Headquarters in Tundikhel, and finally, after the tremendous political changes of 1951, to the Singha Durbar, where they are lying even now.

The documents themselves forming the nucleus of our Nepalese archives, now in the custody of the Foreign Ministry, consist of Sandhi-patras (treaties with local and foreign powers), Chitthi-patras (correspondence), Khadga-nishanas, Dui-chhapes, Ek-chhapes and, of course, Lal Mohars. The material in which the documents are recorded is mostly the sturdy hand-made paper of Nepal. They constitute no doubt the most interesting records in respect of modern history. Amid them are our agreements and treaties with foreign powers, besides multitudinous documents of domestic history.

In this connexion, it would be interesting to record that the chambers in which the documents have been kept have been traditionally described as Jaisi Kothas, which would literally mean the chambers of the Jyotishis or astrologers. But in actual practice the word denotes the writing chambers, and these came to be so-called because it was the astrologers, who, in consideration of their monopolistic literacy in the ancient days, were employed in the beginning as the writers and keepers of documents. The nomenclature and practice have, however, stuck to this day.

(*ii*) *The Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya*

But Nepal has probably given a new orientation to the concept of archives. The conception of historical research in Nepal encompasses, apart from state records, archaeology, before the days of writing, inscriptions, and coins, recording events and royal names, respectively, upon a firmly established chronological background, besides manuscripts, in the different languages and scripts of the land bearing upon astrology, tantras, dharma-sastras, Vedas, literature including drama and lexicography, philosophy and the Puranas, recording at once Nepal's attainments in these fields and grasp of general advance in the different branches of learning. All these different lines of work which contribute in their different ways to the filling up of the lacunae in our knowledge of the past from the most ancient times upto the present day are

co-ordinated under one common Directorate, namely, the Department of Archaeology. It controls and co-ordinates the activitities of the pure archaeologist, whose field ranges from prehistory, through proto-history to early historical periods, the epigraphist, the numismatist, the scholar of ancient manuscripts and the archivist alike. This is as it should be in the initial stages of the development of our country. In course of time, when our material grows and our work intensifies, we may, with justification, bifurcate a little, with provision for an essential overriding liasion, for there is, after all, no conflict in our objectives. For the present, therefore, the Archives with its two collateral branches of manuscripts proper and documents of historical import, with epigraphy thrown in between the two, are grouped under the Department of Archaeology. It has three sections or divisions, called respectively: (i) the Aitihasika Abhilekha Sakha (Historical Documents); (ii) Sadharana-tatha-Arthika Prasasana Sakha (Administration & Finance) and (iii) Hasta-likhita Grantha Sakha (Manuscripts).

The Historical Documents Section working under an Abhilekha Visesajna (Archivist) has six sections called, respectively, Prakashana (Publication), Uddharana-tatha-Suchi-karana (Indexing & Cataloguing), Adhikarana Vyavastha (Acquisition), Marmmat-tatha-Sambhara (Repairs and Preservation), Microfilming, and Lipi (Epigraphy). The Manuscripts Section working under an

Acharya, currently assisted by a Curator provided by the Indian Cooperation Mission, is divided into six sub-sections entitled: (i) Jyotisha (astrology); (ii) Tantras; (iii) Dharma-sastras and Vedas; iv) Sahitya including Nataka and Kosha (Literature including Drama and Dictionary; (v) Darshana (Philosophy) and (vi) the Puranas, respectively. The work in both these sections would consist of collection, classification, cataloguing, preservation, research and publication, respectively. While it is primarily intended that the bulk of the routine work would be done by departmental employees, it is recognized that the limited personnel of the Branch would not be in a position to do full justice to research for the simple fact of their extremely limited number. It may be stated here without reservation that all scholars, private or otherwise, would be given the fullest cooperation and facilities for consultation and working in the Abhilekhalaya on any subject of their choice, under the safeguards and conditions laid down by the Abhilekhalaya. At the same time it must be recognized that no such liberties may be taken with the documents as may endanger their very security.

In the scheme of things envisaged, the academic officials will be rendered free of administrative and financial responsibilities, which will be looked after by the Adminstration and Finance Section working under the overall control and supervision of the Chief Research Officer, so that their entire time may be devoted

to the academic aspects of the work, which will naturally be intensified.

A considerable thought has been given to the technical aspects of the auxiliary work connected with the academic work of the Branch. These consist of (i) chemical treatment of damaged or decaying materials, (ii) fumigation by insecticides; (iii) repairs by lamination; (iv) photographic and microfilm records: as well as (v) eye-copying of the documents in advanced stages of decay.

Though the materials of the manuscripts comprise palmleaf, birch bark, Nepalese paper, ordinary paper imported from Varanasi, canvas, cloth, as well as, in extreme cases, copper plates, besides paper estampages of inscriptions, and thus cover a much wider range than the historical documents, the methods of treatment for presesvation are common to both. The same may be said about recording or copying of the documents. Both may often require the services of efficient linguists versed in different languages as well as scripts of the land in which the documents or manuscripts may be written, for a proper and correct interpretation. There is provision, therefore, for linguists with knowledge of epigraphy to work in the Branch.

The Department has already recruited an Archivist, trained in the National Archives of India, and

he has been sent recently for further training in advanced techniques to Paris for the peripd of one year.

So far the work of the Branch in the main has been confined to the listing of documents that may be available in the different offices of the Govt. of Nepal, and of collecting some Lal Mohars, Tamrapatras (copper plates) Chitthi-patras from the Jhapa and Ilam districts in the Mechi Anchal of Eastern Nepal. The lists of documents have so far been prepared for the Ministries of Law, Commerce and Industries and Defence, respectively, and the offices of the Election Commission, Tahabil Goswara, Health Department, Kitab Khana, Revenue-Department (Record Office), and the Land Survey Department, all in Kathmandu. It is hoped that the survey work would soon be completed. Nevertheless, different offices of the Government may be requested to keep our need in view and make over such documents in which they may no longer be interested for our examination and custody. The importance of this appeal, in the context of what has been stated above, cannot be overemphasized.

The services of the Curator, who is presently working mainly in the Manuscripts Section of the Bir Pustakalaya, would also be available, of course whenever found necessary, in the Archives Section in the new set-up.

Our main difficulty in the way of the intensification of the projected works has been the lack of a proper building for storage and the office. This difficulty has now been overcome, and we shall shortly shift our archives and our rich heritage of manuscripts and copies of inscriptions to the newly built Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya, a strikingly beautiful structure, located next to the Sarvochcha Adalat. It comes to us with honour and pride from the Indian Cooperation Mission, built by them at a cost of nearly seven lakhs of rupees. Apart from the traditional architectural style of the building, which imparts to it, befittingly, the appearence of a temple of learning, it contains within it adequate space for stacking, fumigation, lamination, research, conference, photograpyh, resident scholars' room, canteen, library, besides the administrative offices and officers' rooms. Being centrally located it is easily accessible to all and sundry, including scholars.

(iii) *Manuscripts*

It will not be out of place here to mention briefly a few words about our manuscripts. The nucleus of our manuscripts collection would be formed by the manuscripts in the Bir Pustakalaya, which number about 22,000. The library itself, which contains printed books as well, was formed as the Durbar

Library in the days of Maharajdhiraja Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah Deva. We have in our possession a Lal Mohar that tells us about the setting up of the library, in Samvat 1869 (A. D. 1812), and the regulation of the library service connected with it. It was given a systematic form by Bir Shumsher J. B. Rana, and named after him as the Bir Pustakalaya.

The other group of manuscripts which would find its way into our common collection is now the Rashtriya Pustakalaya, formed out of the private library of Rajaguru Hemraj Pande, bought at a cost of three lakhs of rupees by His Majesty's Government in 1955 (2013). This collection consists of 8013 manuscripts.

It may be remembered in this context that the vast populace of Nepal has still in its possession diverse manuscripts on a multiplicity of subjects, which it cherishes as private family heir-looms. In the larger national interests even these should ultimately find their way into the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya, which it behoves us all to build up and strengthen with all our might and influence at our command.

(iv) *Inscriptions*

One last word in justification of including epigraphical studies under the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya. Our epigraphs are perhaps the most numerous of all.

our historical records. There is hardly a shrine or temple or even an image or sculpture without a dedicatory record of its installation, giving us at once the name of the donor and date and throwing much light on contemporary life besides. They occur in the form of engraved records on stone. copper or wood, and in the form of painted descriptions on our murals. The earliest of them is the stone pillar inscription of Asoka recording his visit to the birthplace of Buddha in the twentieth year of his reign. Apart from being the record of an important historical fact it helps us beyond any scope of doubt in the identification of Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha.

We have obtained some compelling though inferential evidence from our early inscriptions in conjunction with literary records. The inscriptions of Manadeva and his successors were all issued from his palace called Managriha. Likewise the inscriptions of Amsuvarman and his successors were issued from a new palace called the Kailasa-kutabhavana. Later inscriptions of the Lichchhavis were issued from yet another palace, called the Bhadradivasa. The architecture of the palaces drew forth the admiration of the Chinese authors in the seventh century A. D. and must have set the pattern of the multiple-storeyed temples of the pagoda style of Nepal, of which Kashthamandapa in the heart of Kathmandu is a representative example.

For a long time it was believed that the Kashthamandapa, from which our capital city derives its name, was built during the reign of Lakshminarasimha Malla who ruled between Nepal Samvat 740 and 761 (A. D. 1619-1640). But it is now known that the earliest reference to Kashthamandapa occurs in a manuscript called Namasamgiti of the period of Narendra Deva, dated Nepal Samvat 263, which works out to A. D. 1142. One of the earliest inscriptions to refer the city of to Kashthamandapa is of course the Swayambhunatha inscription of Jayarjuna Deva, dated Nepal Samvat 492, working out to A. D. 1371. There are reasons, however, to believe that the temple may have been built in the 11th century A. D. and the name may have been adopted for the city, or at least for the part in which it was situated, slightly later, and this would be a reasonably natural inference.

It is to inscriptions again that we owe the bulk of our reliable evidence, though often in conjunction or reconciliation with literary evidence, on our religion. Though Lord Pasupatinatha is our principal deity, we are completely in the dark as to when exactly the famous temple of Pasupati on the western bank of the Bagmati was built.

It was Amsuvarman who first described himself as bhagavat-pasupati-bhattaraka-padanudhyata, beginning with his Harigaon inscription, dated Samvat 80. The

earliest date of the Pasupati temple can, therefore,be traced back though this piece of evidence to at least the end of the 6th century A. D., though there is every possibility of its earlier existence.

The Pasupati temple inscription of Jayadeva, of the year 153, i.e., of the 8th century A. D., gives a detailed description of the king's devotion to Pasupati and gift of a silver lotus to the lord.

The next great event in the history of the Pasupati temple was its destruction by Shamsuddin Illyas of Bengal in A. D. 1349. The fact is recorded in the Swayambhunatha inscription of the year (Nepal Samvat) 492 (A. D. 1371) of Jayarjuna Deva. The inscriptional evidence is supported by the Gopalaraja Vamsavali, which states that the image was broken into three pieces, and that it was later replaced in Nepal Samvat 480 (A. D. 1360) by Jayasimharama during the reign of Jayarjuna Deva. The invasion of the Nepal valley and its destruction and plunder by Illyas is confirmed by yet another inscription, viz., the Patan Pimbahal inscription dated Nepal Samvat 477 (A. D. 1356). It can only be inferred that the structure of the temple had also suffered the same fate.

The Swayambhunatha inscription also provides evidence of the damage to the Stupa, caused by the invasion of Illyas in A. D. 1349, and its later reconstruction in A. D. 1371.

These are events of great significance in the history of Nepal, recorded in inscription and historical literature alike.

The Pasupatinatha inscription of Jyotirmalla, dated Nepal Samvat 530 (A. D. 1412), indicates that the temple was intact at that date, since he erected a golden finial on the top the temple. If the temple had indeed undergone any large-scale damage at the hands of Illyas, as it must have had, it must have been restored between A. D 1349 and 1412.

A subsequent inscription, of Jayaprakasha Malla. of the year (Nepal Samvat) 549 (A. D 1428) mentions some work of reconstruction carried out on the Pasupati temple, pointing to some damages that may have taken place between A. D. 1412 and 1428.

A copper plate inscription of the time of Narendra Malla dated Nepal Samvat 678 (A D. 1557) records that an incense-burner (dhupapatra) was presented to the temple by his mother Amrita Devi.

We owe information about what appears to have been a complete renovation of the temple in A. D. 1634, to a manuscript called the Guhyasiddhi, dated Nepal Samvat 678, copied during the reign of Surendra Bikram Shah.

It is interesting to note that the gold finial of the temple needed a replacement only a few years later, during

the reign of Pratapa Malla, as recorded in his inscription of that date (Nepal Samvat 775). At the same time golden (or gilt ?) images of Pratapa Malla and his two queens, Rupamati and Ananta Devi, were installed in the shrine, obviously as devotees.

There is indeed no inscriptional evidence of the traditionally believed account of the total renovation carried out to the temple in A. D. 1696, in the name of Riddhilakshmi, mother of Bhupalendra Malla (A. D. 1687-1700) after the woodwork of the temple had been damaged by termites ; but we owe the information to a reliable Thyasapu. These would appear to have been the last major repairs carried out to the temple in the olden days.

Any visitor to the temple cannot but be impressed by the grandeur of the shrine, and by the rich workmanship of ornamental silver sheets, or gilt plates fixed over all woodwork in the shrine, especially on the door panels and tympanums. These were contributed by the kings, Rana Bahadur Shah and Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah, and later by Bhimasena Thapa, respectively, as the inscribed labels on the silver work clearly proclaim.

One of the early evidences on the religious synthesis that underlies the thought-processes and behaviour of the Nepalese people is the Deo-Patan inscription of Saka Samvat 489 (A. D. 567) of Gana Deva, on the pedestal of an image of Sankara-Narayana, near the Pasupati temple. It was set up for the specific purpose

of disabusing the minds of people confused by sectarian differences between Siva and Vishnu. The eclecticism of the Lichchavis is further indicated by the Kathmandu Lagantol inscription, possibly of the period of Narendra Deva, recording the setting up of an image of Arya Avalokitesvara on the pedestal of the image, the face of which, it is sad to reflect, has been completely mutilated.

Perhaps the best example of the prevalent catholicity of the Nepalese people is provided by the Patan Itambahal inscription of Jayasimharama of Nepal Samvat 502 (A. D. 1381), which records the consecration of an image of Arya Tara, and begins with an invocation to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and Tara. But Pasupati is hailed in the inscription as Nepaladhipati (Lord of Nepal), and Jayasimharama calls himself a devotee of Pasupati. The same record tells us about the consecration of Jalasayana Narayana Dipankara and Arya Avalokitesvara.

Though all kings from the time of Amsuvarman, have described themselves as devotees of Pasupati, they have shown equal devotion, through word and deed, to gods and goddesses of the Buddhist pantheon also and helped to pave the way for amity among those who held diverse religious faiths.

The importance of epigraphical studies in the proper assessment of a nation's life can perhaps be

equally illustrated with an example or two from the land of our southern neighbour. An inscription of the 10th century at a little village called Uttiramerur, near Kanchipuram in the Chingleput district of Madras, describes not merely the prevalence of local selfgovernment at that date, but the very details of the process of election by ballot.

Yet another inscription of the 7th century at Tirumayam in the Pudukkottai sub-division of the Tiruchirappalli district of Madras tells us about the system of notation used in Dravidian music. This is of great significance in the history of the evolution of Indian music in general.

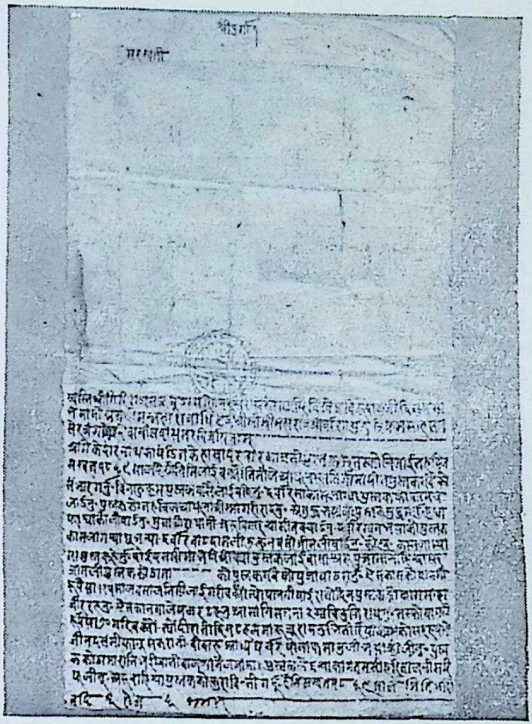
The importance of the integrated study of epigraphs as essential documents of history cannot, therefore, be over-emphasized. Instances can also be multiplied, but they need not detain us any longer.

E. Conclusion

It would be clear, therefore, to see that a proper extraction of the grains of history from the trappings of chaff would depend very greatly on a concerted study of inscriptions, literary records and historical documents together. In boldly attempting this integrated study as a unified discipline in the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya under the directorial control of the

Department of Archaeology in a spirit of mutual understanding and collaboration, Nepal has made a novel experiment and has indeed broken fresh ground in the field of historical research. We also seek the co-operation of all lovers of Nepal and Nepalology to join hands with us and share in our common national undertaking. We can do no better than seek God's blessings in our long and arduous task ahead.

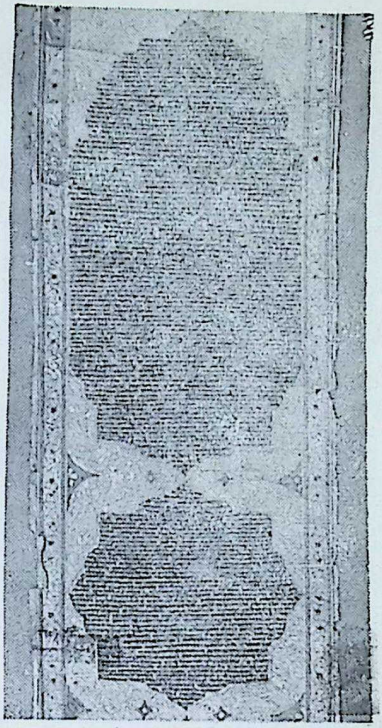
THE END



Lal Mohar of King Girvan Yuddha Vikram Shah regarding the library and library service. See page 15.

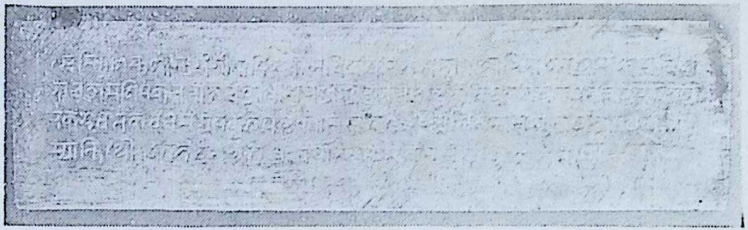
Plate II

Illustrated paper manuscript
of the Mahabharata.



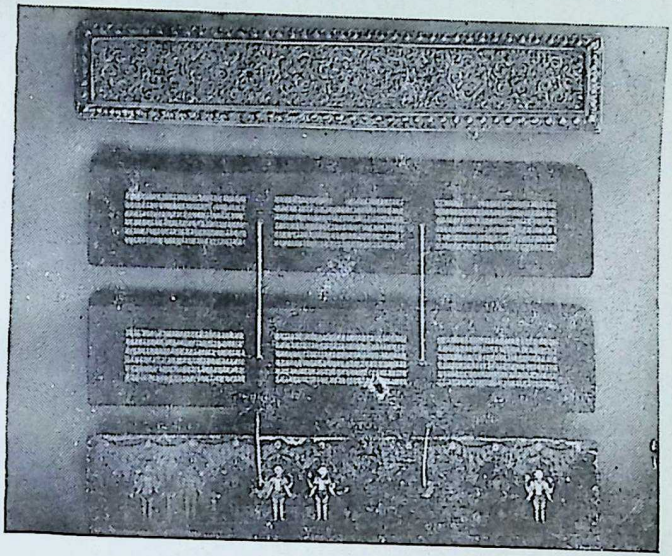
Illustrated paper manuscript
of the Mahabharata, in
diminutive lettering.

Plate IV



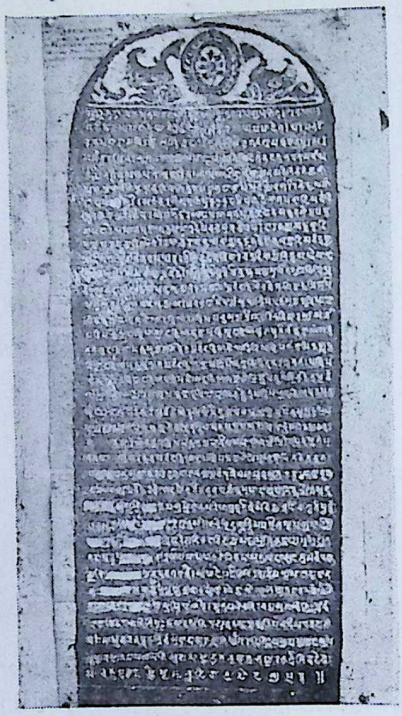
Inscribed ivory cover of a manuscript of the time of king Pratapa Malla.

Plate V



Illustrated paper manuscript with ornamentally gilt sheet over upper cover and interiorly painted lower cover, both of wood.

Plate VI



Estampage of Lichchhavi inscription on stone.

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